

## ABSTRACT

A system for enabling the use of network features in a network element is provided.

The system comprises a softkey assignment system that is operable to perform operations with respect to at least one softkey, the softkey assignment system being operable to assign a softkey value to the softkey and to update the softkey status to an assigned state upon the assignment of a softkey value to the softkey, the softkey assignment system also being operable to update the softkey status to an unassigned state upon the receipt of a deactivated softkey value for the softkey. The system also comprises a network element. The network element comprises a service module and a softkey validation system. The service module provides a first network features that may be optionally enabled or disabled. The softkey validation is operable to enable the use of the first network feature when a received softkey value is the same as a first valid softkey value. The softkey validation system is also operable to enable the use of the first network feature a second time, after the first network feature has been deactivated, when the received softkey value is the same as a second valid softkey value, wherein the first valid softkey value is not the same as the second valid softkey value.